

I thought it was pretty good, but it wasn't spectacular. It was very good. I heard a grown man behind me sobbing. I thought to myself, I hope I haven't said anything inappropriate in my remarks. He came up to me with these huge arms and hugged me from the back and said, Senator, I have never known my government to do anything good for me—I don't know if I agree with that—but, he said, Today, you have given me my son back. I will never forget that as long as I live. That is what this program means to parents. It is giving them their children back, which is the greatest gift a parent, as the Presiding Officer knows, having four children, can have. These kids are floundering in the regular high schools, not making any sense to them, because we haven't done I think what we should be doing in all cases with them in high school. This program works. Not only does it work for the individual, but it works for our economy.

I wish to read into the RECORD a few of the statistics about what it means to our country when we save one person from dropping out of high school. These are the statistics. One in every three teen mothers is a dropout from high school. One in four babies born is born to a high school dropout. The National Guard program has graduated more than 92,850 former high school dropouts with 99 percent of them going on to either pursue higher education, a career in the military, or employment, according to a recent audit. The annual cost of graduating one child from this program is \$14,000. Contrast that with the \$40,000 it costs annually for incarceration of someone who failed to graduate, got on the wrong road, got involved in drugs or in a life of crime. For a \$14,000 investment, leveraging the strength of the National Guard, leveraging the hopes and prayers of parents who want so much for their children to turn around, leveraging the power of the individual child knowing something is wrong and wanting to make it right, I couldn't think of a better program than this.

I have spoken personally to Secretary Arne Duncan about this. I have spoken personally on every occasion I can to members of the White House leadership team and the education team and the members of the Defense Appropriations team. So I am hoping we recognize the soaring dropout rate as a national crisis that costs our economy billions of dollars. There are programs that work. Not every program that government invents or frames fails. So for people who say we can't spend any more money, let's spend it on programs such as this. Let's move the money from some programs that aren't working as well to programs such as this and leverage the investments our country is making, whether it is through the National Guard or through other programs.

The median income of a high school dropout is \$18,000 versus \$25,000 for a high school graduate. Over a lifetime,

that amounts to literally millions of dollars in lost employment opportunities.

There are any number of reasons. I think I have explained them fairly well. I will submit a longer statement for the RECORD. But again, today, we wish to recognize our National Guard Youth Challenge Program. We wish to thank the National Guard. Not only are they on the front lines in Iraq and in Afghanistan and everywhere around the world, but they are on the front lines right here, helping us educate future military members, future executives, future workforce leaders, and we are very proud of the leadership of the National Guard.

I wish to thank the Presiding Officer again for her support and for the support of many of our colleagues for this very worthwhile and meritorious program.

SENATE RESOLUTION 420—HONORING THE MEMBERS OF THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA FOR THEIR SERVICE AND SACRIFICE ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. COBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 420

Whereas members of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard of the State of Oklahoma reside throughout the State and come from various communities, backgrounds, and professions;

Whereas the Army National Guard and Air National Guard of the State of Oklahoma are composed of several units, including the Joint Forces Headquarters, the 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 45th Fires Brigade, the 90th Troop Command, the 189th Regional Training Institute, Camp Gruber Joint Maneuver Training Center, the 137th Air Refueling Wing, the 138th Fighter Wing, the 205th Engineering Installation Squadron, and the 219th Engineering Installation Squadron;

Whereas, since September 11, 2001, units and members of the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard of the State of Oklahoma have been deployed, and are continuously being deployed, in support of United States military operations at home and abroad;

Whereas the 45th Infantry Brigade mobilized in 2003 for Operation Enduring Freedom and deployed more than 700 soldiers to Afghanistan to provide training to Afghan Security Forces;

Whereas the 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team mobilized in 2007 for Operation Iraqi Freedom and deployed more than 2,700 soldiers to provide command and control and conduct security force and detainee operations, representing the largest single deployment for the Oklahoma Army National Guard since the Korean War;

Whereas the 45th Fires Brigade mobilized in 2008 for Operation Iraqi Freedom and deployed more than 1,000 soldiers to provide command and control and conduct security force operations;

Whereas 90th Troop Command units mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Oper-

ation Enduring Freedom and deployed more than 2,600 soldiers to conduct combat support and combat service support missions;

Whereas the 189th Regional Training Institute and Camp Gruber Joint Maneuver Training Center have provided professional training to military and nonmilitary personnel to enhance domestic security and prepare units for deployments abroad;

Whereas the Oklahoma Army National Guard mobilized in 2005 and deployed more than 2,500 soldiers to support relief operations in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, including assisting law enforcement agencies with traffic control and security, transporting and distributing food, water, and ice, conducting search and rescue and ground and air evacuations, providing generator support, and performing other missions to protect life and property;

Whereas the 137th Airlift Wing mobilized in 2003 for Operation Iraqi Freedom and deployed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as part of the largest C-130 wing assembled in history, transporting troops, food, supplies, and equipment to United States forces in Iraq;

Whereas the 137th Airlift Wing mobilized in 2003 for Operation Enduring Freedom and deployed to Uzbekistan, providing critical airlift and logistical support for United States forces in Afghanistan;

Whereas between 2003 and 2006, the 137th Airlift Wing transported 39,368 troops and 11,170 tons of critical cargo to United States forces in Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas the 137th Airlift Wing mobilized in 2005 and deployed one of the first C-130 units to support relief operations in response to Hurricane Katrina, including evacuating hospital and nursing home residents to safety by air, providing critical logistical support, and airlifting 2,500 members of the Oklahoma Army National Guard to population centers to provide aid to hurricane victims;

Whereas the 138th Fighter Wing mobilized in 2005, 2007, and 2008 for Operation Iraqi Freedom and deployed to Iraq to provide close air support and engage in combat missions, during which the 138th Fighter Wing expended 109,000 pounds of combat ordnance and successfully destroyed numerous targets; and

Whereas, since September 11, 2001, the 138th Fighter Wing has flown numerous Air Sovereignty Alert missions in the United States, protecting high value domestic targets against attack and contributing to homeland defense, and in 2008 the 138th Fighter Wing was recognized as the most active alert facility in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) expresses its gratitude to the members of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard of the State of Oklahoma and their families for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States since September 11, 2001; and

(2) recognizes the citizen-soldiers and airmen of the Oklahoma National Guard as invaluable to the national security of the United States, vital to defending against threats both foreign and domestic, and essential for responding to State and national emergencies.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3324. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3310 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill H.R. 2847, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies for the